XXXIIB Italians

ITALIAN

This emigrant came from the city of Messina, Sicily and has been in this country for the last two years. He is evidently a hard working man when he gets the opportunity to work, which he claims has been mighty scarce the last year. In fact he had to appeal to the Italian Benevolent Society for help, to keep himself and wife from starving. He claims to be a good stone mason, rough carpenter and cement worker, but not being a union man, has not been able to connect with anything steady.

He thinks this a peculiar country; that a man able and willing to work, is not allowed to, even if he works for less, than wages paid to union men. He states that it must be alright though or it would not be so. It was hard to make him understand, as he has a very poor grasp of the English language. Had to use an interpreter, and he was not what one call a howling success, even after having been in this country almost two years. It seems to be very difficult for the natives of southern Italy to become able to speak our language, whereas the people from northern Italy came to be able to master the language very well in a short space of time.

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This man's home in Messina was of ordinary type, the average of Italian working-man. An excellent old house of four rooms, minus running water, gas or electricity.

Water was carried there from a public fountain, and his two sisters did their washing of clothes and etc, in the public square. He lived on the outskirts of Messina, had a small truck garden, and two goats, which provided both milk and cheese for the family. The food, as usual in Italian families of the poorer class, was good, but none to plentiful. The house was poorly furnished, from the American standpoint. His mother had the, only good mattress, the rest of them using straw matresses.

He had served his time in the Italian Army, but found it very difficult to get permission to leave the country. By paying a small sum of money, a bribe in other words, he was given permission to leave. Arrived in New York in the spring, but he did not like it there, too many people and always in a hurry. He went to Pittsburg where he got a job in the steel mills, but found the work too tough. He then went to Chicago, did not like it there and came to San Francisco. After being there about three months, he married a Sicilian woman, and then his trouble began.

He was undecided whether to stay here or go back to Sicily. However news from Italy, coming through the underground system, has made him decide to stay here, and very thankful for the privilege of doing so.

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ITALIAN

The subject of this interview was an Italian girl, Maria, a bout twenty seven years of age. She came to California from Newark New Jersey in 1930. The past four years she has been working in a gift shop in Oakland. In 1931 she married an American born Italian. He was a musician and at the time of their marriage was employed with a dance orchestra in a local ball room. About six months after their marriage he lost his job and has been unable since then to find steady work. The girl was working when she met him and has kept her job. For over two years she has been supporting her husband and their child which is now two years old. She is very discouraged and said she often thinks of killing herself. Her husband drinks whenever he can get it and often mistreats her. She said her family in Italy were well-to-do land owners and in spite of the hard times there, have been living well.

Maria said she would like to go back to Italy but that she is unable to do so on account of her husband and child, and the lack of money.

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Maria said she would like to go back to Italy but does not intend to do so on account of her husband and child, and the lack of money.

Before she came to California she was employed in a textile mill in New York. Her present employer is an old lady of means, who operates a gift shop for a hobby. The girl practically runs the shop to suit herself. Often for weeks at a time she does not see her employer, who travels extensively. This girl lives in a tiny flat in the same building which houses the shop. She goes to church regularly and occasionally to a movie. She reads popular novels and does hand work, sometimes selling pieces she makes in the shop. At present, she is despondent and moody and hates the confinement of her life. She said she would leave her husband but she is afraid of the trouble he would cause her.

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ITALIAN

This immigrant, with his wife and one child, came from the city of Turin in the northwestern part of Italy. He and his wife were both employed as janitor and janitress in the Academy of Sciences. Their average work was twelve hours a day, and plenty of work to do, as they never seemed able to keep up with it. Owing to the scarcity of money they were always shorthanded which made them do double work. They saved what money they could, often going without the necessities of life, trying to get hold of enough, so they could buy a small farm. He and his small family lived in the basement of the building in two poorly furnished rooms; they were glad to get that, as they did not have to pay rent. Their food was the ordinary fare of the poorer lot of the Italians. As to their clothing, they never went anywhere, so it did not cost much and they wore it a long time. This man neither smokes or drinks, quite strange in an Italian.

His wife's health started to break down from the heavy work, and seeing no opportunity to better their condition, Colombo decided to leave Italy. He had intended to migrate to Brazil where his brother

had emigrated several years before, but he was persuaded to come to the United States instead.

They were held up for over six months in Naples before they received permission to depart and they just did make the quota allowed. If his army record had not been exceptionally good he doubted if he could have received permission to leave. They arrived in New York City, in due course of time, and had no difficulty in finding friends among his own people who guided him until he could get a smattering of English, which he picked up rapidly.

Colombo worked hard at various jobs, receiving better pay than he had ever been able to make. His wife's health remained poor by the weather being too cold in the winter and too hot in summer for her, so they decided to come west to California.

Colombo has been here a little over a year; his wife has fully regained her health.

He has a steady job with the Santa Fe Rail-Road making four dollars a day as helper in the boiler house and shops. He has been very lucky so far in not haveing been laid off, he doesn't know why, but plenty of older hands have been let out. Colombo has an idea that

because he tends to his work and tries to please everybody is the reason he hangs on. He has two children now and is going to make them good Americans. They have a comfortable little home of four rooms with a nice back yard which his wife has filled with flowers.

They have a plentiful supply of good plain substantial food and good clothes. What more could one want? If his wife could only learn how to speak English he would be very happy, but says she just can't seem to learn it. Colombo never intends to go back to Italy he is perfictly contented here.

This man is of the better laboring class, uneducated but honest and industrious. He says" This country will come out of its trouble all right; the rest of the world is very sick; look out for war in the near future in Europe".

ITALIAN

The subject of this investigation is an Italian youth, eighteen years old. He was born in Oakland, and has lived there all his life. His parents are naturalized citizens. They came from Italy about twenty-five years ago. The father is engaged in the rooming house business. He is the proprietor of an inexpensive hotel in west Oakland, which he leases from a real estate company. He has two other children beside the son whom I interviewed. They are both girls, still going to school. The son went to school until he was fifteen years of age; since that time he has been engaged intermittently, first as a fisherman on a boat.

On his first trip he went to Alaska where they loaded salmon. On his second trip they carried fish from Monterey to San Pedro. After this he spent some time unemployed. Since then he has had various jobs, mostly around the fish boats or on the wharves. For some time he worked catching small fish which are used for bait. These fish he sold to other fishermen in a small shop in Oakland.

He got married at seventeen, just about a year ago. His wife is an American born Italian girl, his own age. At present he is unemployed and they are living in his father's house. The father seems to think that his son

does not want to work and there is much hard feeling between them. On several occasions they have almost come to blows. There is very little profit in the father's business, and the penurious circumstances in which they live are almost too much for the young man's wife who apparently is well educated, in a cultural sence, but is without technical schooling or experience. The boy's mother seemed sympathetic but has little understanding of their difficulties. In private, the boy told me that if he did not get work soon, he was going to leave his wife and family and go off somewhere by himself, probably to South America.

ITALIAN

This subject is from a little town named Feltre, in the province of Venice(V) or Trent) situated in the northern part of Italy. It is a mountain town of about six thousand(6) inhabitants.

This man, as his parents before him, was a silk weaver, until the bottom fell out of that industry.

His people owned a small plot of ground, possibly three acres, a four room house, and what he called several goat sheds.

The house was the usual peasant domicile, no running water, but supplied from a well; kerosene lamps; and meagrely furnished.

The cooking was done in a big outdoor oven. They raised their own vegetables, chickens and ducks. A herd of eight goats supplied them with milk and cheese, with some left over which they sold in the town.

He served his time with the Italian army, mostly in Africa. After his discharge from the army, he went back home, but found his old way of living so dull, that he decided, to visit America of which he had heard so much that the opportunities of becoming rich were so many, was the place for him. He left home and went to Venice, and from there he worked his way to Italy.

Found work there and stayed there almost two years saving his money in the meantime. Eventually, having saved up enough and being one of quota allowed, boarded the steamer and after a very rough voyage landed in New York. Stayed there only three days, then went to Pittsburg.

lots of Italians there, and had no trouble getting work in the steel pits. And was that work, long hours and short pay. Worked almost a year there then came to Chicago.

Worked a short while in the stock yards, but could not stand the climate, so his next jump was to California, so here he is, and here he is going to stick.

Did several odd jobs, none of them lasting very long, so decided to go into business for himself. Is doing very nicely for himself in the window cleaning and porter profession. Is having an extremely hard time mastering the English language, but says he will succeed. The man is intelligent, but with very little schooling; one of the light complexioned natives, looks as if there were German strains in him. Never was interested in the political situation at home; said it would not have done him any good if he had,

To his mind, the United States is the only land in the world.

Has his first papers, and is impatiently waiting for two years to pass, so that he can get his final papers, and so become a full-fledged citizen.

Boards with an Italian family over on North Beach, plenty of good food, a good room, and clean decent people to live with, so what more could one ask?

This man is a good clean-minded man, and will make a good law-abiding citizen.

ITALIAN

This immigrant is a native of the town of Fermo, in the central eastern part of Italy. The town has about twenty-five thousand inhabitants, and is situated several miles inland from the Adriatic Sea.

The son of peasants, he followed various callings for a living, and none of them proved very successful. He was at different times employed in the woolen mills, as a porter in the church, and in the water department, as a laborer. The pay for his jobs was very poor compared to the American rate of pay. H Having tired of trying to get anywhere in his home town, he moved to the seaport town of Ancona.

After knocking around in Ancona for a few weeks, he obtained a job as deck hand on a steamer with a cargo for Naples. When he arrived in Naples, he was discharged, and was cheated out of the money that was his as wages. He had a very difficult time in Naples, as the port was crowded with men out of work.

Eventually, he got a job as water tender on an Italian passenger and cargo steamer. He made one trip to the Argentine Republic, and another to England. Then, as he heard so much about America from his fellow sailors, he decided to immigrate to America.

He was over eight months waiting for his passports as the quota had been filled and he had to wait his turn. Eventually, he arrived in New York City, and after he was there almost a month, he went to Reading, Pennsylvania, where he had no trouble getting a job with the Pennsylvania Railroad Company, as a laborer. He started to work for a dollar and sixty cents a day, and worked along steadily until he was getting two dollars and twenty-five cents per day as a straw boss. Too many Italians of the wrong sort, mostly Sicilians, were working there, and as it didn't suit him, he quit and moved on to Chicago, where also he went to work for the Railroad. He worked in the Chicago yards for a year and a half, and still being dissatisfied, he headed for California. He had picked up the English language fairly well, and he had not been long in San Francisco before he got a job as straw boss on the construction gang with the Southern Pacific. This time the men under him were Mexicans, and very easy to handle.

He has been making three dollars and fifty cents per day for sometime, and has been married, during this period, also. Everything has been going ~~alright~~ all right for him, but if the Southern Pacific keeps laying off hands as they are doing now, he is wondering how soon it will be his turn; he's not particularly worried, tho, as he has been able to save up quite a bit of money.

As far as living conditions in this country compare with conditions in Italy, he says there is no comparison. In this country they live, and in the old country, they exist. Furthermore, the United States has nothing to fear whilst Europe is sitting on a powder keg. Politically, everything is Mussolini, and woe be it to any man that thinks and says otherwise, he says they just seem to disappear from off the face of the earth, and no questions are asked.

He has his first papers, and is impatiently waiting for the time when he will receive his second papers, and become a full-fledged citizen.

This man is honest, and a hard worker. No doubt he will make a decent and law abiding citizen.

ITALIAN

This man, a brother of the previously discussed subject, emigrated to America in 1913 at the age of fourteen. He lived with his Aunt and Uncle, and sold papers for about two years, after which time he got a job in a fruit market. He studied at night to aquaint himself with American speech and customs. He was interested in mechanical work and engineering and studied what he could of these subjects in his spare time. In 1922 he went to work in a garage assisting the mechanics, and after about two years was given a job as a mechanic in the garage.

He worked at this job for about two years, and then quit and went into bootlegging. From 1927 to 1931 he continued in this business and due to what he termed some "lucky breaks" he was able to save about $20,000 during this period of time.

In 1931, tiring of the strain, he left New York City, and went to San Francisco where he opened a garage again with a friend of his brother's as a partner; and has been engaged in that business since, making a good living.

In 1932 he married an American born girl of Italian descent. He has not any children.

He has encountered some racial prejudice, especially during the period during which he was in the illicit liquor business, but generally he has not met with much difficulty on that score.

He has no desire to return to Italy. He is thoroughly "Americanized" and is an ardent supporter of Roosevelt, who he thinks, ranks with Mussolini as one of the foremost men in the world today.

The depression failed to affect him, as he continued to prosper in the liquor business, and his garage business was started during a dark period, and has improved steadily.

J. Miller (1) 94

John Leggio's father died when he was thirteen years old, his father was a shoemaker in a small town in Sicily, this left John in sole support of his mother and himself.

He commenced learning the shoemaking trade when he was but eleven years old, but was without enough experience to carry on his fathers business.

He had a brother in New Orleans who was working at the shoe making trade, that sent sufficient money to bring John and his mother to this country to join him. He worked in New Orleans with his brother for four years and not caring for the climate there, decided to bring his mother to California, and is now operating a repair shop in business for himself.

He is thirty nine years old but hasn't married yet and does not think his

income sufficient to support a wife and his mother, his belief is that a wife should remain at home and take care of the house and not go to business as so many married women do in this country, he says married women do not get jobs in this country.

This man prefers America to his own country and says the reason is his coming here young made it easy for him to adapt himself to our customs and things in general as they come along.

John Leggio hopes to marry some day and have a family, but not until he feels he is earning sufficient money to care for them properly.

ITALIAN

This woman is about thrity five years old. She is short and stocky. She has a very beautiful complexion with a madonna like expression in her face. She works in a small restaurant that caters largely to Italian people.

Her father left Italy about twenty years ago and brought her with him. He had a small vineyard in Italy, but when he arrived in San Francisco he went into the bakery business with a friend. He worked at this trade until about five years ago when he and his wife returned to Italy to die.

Her father and brothers supported her but occassionally she would work in a restaurant for some one the family knew and make a little money for extra clothes. These were all Italian restaurants and she never learned to speak English, only a few phrases. One time when she was working she met a very handsome man. He was invited to the house and they were married in three weeks. She says about her marriage, " I like it alright--before it was better, now he sick and I work too hard. Got to work six hour in restaurant; go home; clean house; wash clothes; cook. Got too muchy work but can't help, got to do. Before he got good

job, I stay home, no got too much work. Now I got too much work. What can do? I learn read leetle bit, enough. Maybe he get better, get job, I no have to work. I got a two boy, one girl, they help leetle bit; too young, no can work much.

G. C. Was born in South Chicago 23 years ago of Italian parents. He finished public school and went to work as an auto mechanic. From his school days he became associated with a gang of boys of his section. As the years past this gang developed from stealing tires and automobiles into bigger robberies. They began to rob freight cars of cigarettes and tobbacco. About five years ago he his brother and three other boys, one a cousin, robbed a Chicago freight yard of a considerable quantity of cigarrettes They sold these through a fence. He and his brother were suspected, arrested, tried and convicted. For this he served six months. About four months after his release on parole althe he was employed as a mechanic in a garage at night another robbery took place; again it was cigarettes. This time as the unloading was proceeding some railroad police opened fire and wounded his brother in the leg, in the battle one cop was killed. The car that was used in the robbery was G.C's car as was found by the license number. Police arrested him but due to his being employed at the time of the robbery, he had an alibi. He left for the west at once, coming first to Los Angeles where he became acquainted and married. In this robbery his brother being shot xxx in the leg he went to Detroit to a private doctor . The police checking up on this arrested tried and convicted him and sentenced him for six years. Every since then the police have been looking for him. Three years ago he came to Oakland and secured work on a dredger in the bay. He worked steady and was a model husband and lived as a good citizen should live. His wife and friends here knew nothing of his past but the police finally traced him to Los Angeles; his friends there directed them to Oakland

not knowing of his trouble and he was arrested while working. He claimed he was not guilty. He is a well built goodlooking intelligent young man and the type that has great possibilities as he has a sincere and pleasant personality. Some of his relatives were revolutionary and his early criminal carreer was undoubtedly due to his ignorance of economic conditions and to the influence of the gang.

by S. Pite

- If today I'm out on the broad line and looking forward with confidence ,don't think it is what people commonly call good luck - said Piacomo with the smile of a satisfied man,pouring a teaspoonful of sugar in a demi-tasse of Italian black coffee. -Life was hard for me in the beginning and that suffering saved probably a greater one.

Then with a gentle touch of sarcasm : -Don't you know that most of the American leaders began their career from the rank and file ! It often happened to me to open a magazine and read a biography of prominent men in politics,science or business ,starting with the very appealing chapter of selling newspapers,or a twelve hour a day job for three dollars per week. Your life was too easy in Europe,too easy in this land of abundance ,then earning a good ~~having~~ living for a man of your education was not difficult. But once the storm raged,you did not have the necessary hardness of muscles and brains to guide your ship towards a safe harbor . And blessed be the SERA which quickly answered your SOS and saved you from the humiliation of begging your friends for a dollar.

Then ~~xxxxxx~~ softening the unpleasant remark with a large gesture of his heavy hands : -I don't want to offend you in the least,but I must be rude . If some day I will be blessed with a son ,I shall prepare him to meet the emergencies of life ,and build a strong soul in an equally strong body. Plenty of food and plenty of work. Some parents, afraid to send their children out without heavy wool garments ,ready to warm their beds as soon a little cold rolls down from the Sierra , interfering in the fight with the boy next door,are pitiful to me . These children have a slight chance to succeed in life especially if the way is not all paved.

You know my family,so many times have I spoken to you of my little village lost in the midst of the picturesque wood descending towards

land land . Seven children ,four boys and three girls with ever increasing appetite ,due to the fresh breeze of the Alps ,the giants washing Italy's boundaries from Switzerland. And to feed us ,only the strong arms of my father ,one acre of land and a cow ,fat when the harvest was abundant and scheletrical when the drought ruined the crop.

Schooling ? Certainly ,till the age of seven ,enough to learn our signature and keep us from bothering mamma ,who slaved all day long washing clothes ,baking maize bread ,mending rags and trying to keep the house clean . After seven, it was time to go to work. My father was of the opinion that too much school makes children lazy and opens the mind to unhealthy dreams.

Then when April appeared and the grass on the mountains was less than one foot high,he used to hire us out to some shepherd across the boundaries ,in Switzerland,entrusting us to him throughout the summer . A sack,some poor garments,an alpenstock ,and running from sunrise to sundown after sheep on the pasture . Nightfall,and there came our supper of bread ,cheese ,milk ,to retire to a bunch of hay ,with some more hay for a pillow. At the end of the season ,my father used to collect from the shepherd as much as seventy-five lires . Imagine ,less than ten dollars for three months of hard work ,in dangerous mountains , where every season several boys never came back. But one cannot be a coward when there is a dire necessity.

In the fall we hunted for tourists in San Mauritz ,four miles away from the village ,offering wild flowers ,carrying their bags ,jumping in the lake to fish the coins they threw in ,making ourselves useful in hundred different ways for the sake of the little money we proudly gave to mother in the evening .

At fourteen ,a boy of the working class is considered a man and well able to start learning a trade ,and true to custom, my father managed to send me up in the mountains again,this time as stone mason's helper .

Mind you,at that time there were no wheelbarrows available. The old malt bucket had to be carried up on the cliff for ten hours a day, and there was one helper for every two stone masons . God help the boy who leaves the stone mason idle for one minute . So inch by inch ,with the sweat of these Italian boys ,mine included ,were built those beautiful snake-like roads on the Alps through which the roaring guns passed later ,bringing destruction to the same people ,who - irony of fate - paved their way to death.

In 1905 the wages of the best stone mason were five lire per day, the helper getting from one to two according to the age and strength. No wonder that I learned the value of money . I plodded along learning the trade thoroughly till the age of twenty ,when compulsory military law called me to enlist in the national army . That was in 1911 . One year later I was in Tripolitania to fight Arabs and Bedouins till 1915. My class was kept xxxx in service very long ,due to the World War,and I was left in Africa ,that probably is the reason that I survived.When you meet a man of my class ,that is ,born in 1891,and who lived through the ordeal of the war ,you can consider him a rarity ,a man with hard skin. Most of them remained among the dunes of Africa or the glaciers of the Alps.

Was I discouraged during all those years ? Not a bit. I can recall them the happiest of my life . If it were not for the drinking waters of Tengasi xxxx which were gastly polluted ,I would not hesitate to go back again .But the hateful dissenteria xxxx which afflicted me for two years after my dicharge and still continues to disturb if I over indulge in eating,is not a pleasent remembrance of Africa .

Honorably discharged from the army ,with three hundred lire in my xx-pocket (the internal Italian government valued my loyal service of eight years not more than that) I went back to my family . One of my brothers had been killed in the war . I had been xxx away from home eight years and

I am sad to say I did not get a very warm greeting. It was not very encouraging for my family to have me back with few lire in my pocket and with a sick body, especially with the misery resulting from war, and bread being sold on the scale of grams. I was in no condition to xxxx eat maize bread, for that was the only kind available. What I needed was a strict healthy diet and a room to myself. And to aggravate matters I was too weak to work. I slept in the old barn, alone, on the hay, the seven months that I remained in Italy. My father could not be made to understand that a sick man could not possibly work, and said I was lazy and good for nothing else but to read those horrid big books I had brought back with me from the army, and those that the village priest would lend me from time to time. Life for me was miserable then. If it hadn't been for my good mother, who always had a smile and saw to it that I had a good dish of soup, it would have been unbeareble.

Brooding and contemplating, I turned my thoughts to migration. I wrote to a cousin who was in California for my fare, and in less than a month, everything was set for my new adventure.

Needless asking if I was glad to go. The evening before I was to leave, after a special supper, which my dear mother had prepared to my liking, I asked my father if he could not give me the three hundred lire I had entrusted to his keeping, so that I may at least have some money to keep in my pocket for any emergency. He flatly refused, saying that an emigrant does not need any money on a steamship where everything is paid for, that I would get food, confortable bed and plenty of rest. Only the silent appeal of my mother kept me from loosing my temper towards my father.

The following day, when I said farewell, he kissed me and gave me two hundred of the three hundred lire I had asked for, and then reached for his handkerchief to crush away the mist appearing in his eyes. Poor

old man ! He passed away last year ,but I still have vivid memories of him . In his heart he meant to be good ,but hardship and the burden of so large a family deeply influenced his character. Every year ,for the Christmas holidays I used to send him ten dollars ,and five each to my mother and my sisters,and judging from the affectionate expressions in their letters ,they certainly appreciated the little gift .

The first year in the new land was not very rosy for me . I came directly to California ,to be exact near Bakers field ,where the cousin who had sent me the fare owned a dairy . My first job was at milking cows, about twenty of them each day ,which was a hard task even for these big hands of mine . In the winter time I was afflicted with chill-blains and compelled to leave the job ,altho I was still in debt towards my cousin for about two hundred dollars .

Few words of English at my command ,few dollars in my pocket ,I moved to the nearest town ,Bakersfield ,where a good natured Polish roomkeeper gave me shelter on credit . After a short time of job hunting ,I succeeded and it was what I tought a position of first class ,as soon as I started to shift [illegible] on the trucks ,thousands of big ice chunks . My boss was amazed at my skill and strength in the storage room . Six dollars a day . In six months I paid the indebteness to my cousin ,and gave him an additional three hundred dollars to help him with buying of more live stock .

A scrap with the foreman and I left the job ,to move to San Francisco where I went back to my old trade as stone mason . Many side walks in this town and in Daly City know my hands, When I left that job ,during a slack season ,my bank account was of three figures .

But what I like best is the janitor job I got immediately after and that I am still holding . Eighty dollars per month and room in a beautifull apartament house up on Vann Ness ave hills ,with plenty of time to read and study in the afternoons and evenings . When wages where

better I reached as much as 120 per month plus some extras that I made on washing cars for some wealthy tenants.

Everybody is satisfied with my work ,the manager,the owner,the tenants. No one has ever had cause to complain against Giacomo in the apartament house . Many ladies find pleasure in chatting with me and I don't need to go out for my lunch or to the store for a good cigar . My wages are now 90 dollars per month ,but I can still save 60 and I have no worries for the future . I have time and means for occasional recreation, as the movies a good theater or an interesting lecture and withall I am satisfied with my condition .

My savings are above ten thousand and in case of emergency I can live on the interest for many years to come .

Depression ? Not for me ,my friend . Forty five years old ,with all my teeth and strong too,willing to work ,to enjoy life ,I face the future with confidence .

I'm a citizen and a good one . If some day ,perhaps soon , I decide to marry a nice old fashion girl ,not so young,you understand , when my time cames ,I hope to leave behind in San Francisco ,many clean windows, and a respectable family .

PERSEVERANCE.

By C.Zito.

The warmth of the fire-lit library did not seem to penetrate the conversation between elderly Mr.and Mrs. Astare, who were discussing the forthcoming marriage of their only and extreme daughter Adele, it was quite evident that neither approved of this union, first because of his social standing. Altho of a refined family he did not meet with their expectations. Then his position was not such as to permit their daughter to enjoy the luxiuries she had been accustomed to .Nevertheless, pretty headstrong Adele would have it so, and so it came to pass.

The wedding was a well ordered affair, with a wedding breakfast after, to which only the most intimate relatives were invited. They were the most talked of couple in the vicinity, inseperable and sufficient unto themselves. Pierre resented every moment he must be away from her , his only consolation at his day's work being that as a result of it he would be able to surprise her with little gifts to make life easier for her.

But alas! this happiness was short lived, The end of the second year found Adele an expectant mother and Pierre already gone to eternity.She returned to her father's house where she was soon blessed with a son whomm she called Pierre .

Three years after sorrow again towered over the Astare household,this time with the death of good Mrs. Astare. Greifstricken and unconsolable Mr. Astare became critically ill. Specialists were called in and several major operations performed. At the end of a year Mr. Astare was pronounced completely out of danger altho quite weak. Due to the great expenditures his balance at the bank had dwindled down to nothing and to aggravate matters they had replaced him at the office.

They must keep up appearances, it would never do to have their friends find them in this state of misery, But how and where? It was highly improper for Adele altho still young to go to work. Oh, what to do,for especially in southern Italy in their lovely Palermo beginning with the middle class it is not befitting a lady to do anything but dainty handwork, or if her ability is for any one of the arts such as music, painting or writing, she may specialize in any one or all if it be her desire, but not for commercializing purpose.

Lila , Mr.Astare's neice , had come to the United States fifteen years before and had made quite a success of it. With four children and her husband , they had had heavy financial loses in Italy. With what they had left,they finally decided to come to the United States and start all over again.

In the beginning it was quite difficult for them. Lila's husband had a good education, but he could not hide the fact that he did not know the English language. And that was his greatest handicap, for beside that he was a persistant go-getter.

They struggled for the first four years and then luck struck in the right place, An opportunity presented itsself in the form of a foreign exchange business.He made very well climbing to the top in a very short time . He was very thoughtful toward his family and saw to it that they had every thing nedded for their comfort and ease.

It was with these that Mr. Astare and Adele consulted . Encouraged by Lila, who had been brought up by this uncle and who adored him and who sent their fare they were finally settled in an apartment of their own ,in a fairly good section of the town not far from her house. With her affectionate understanding and financial aid, they were able to recover somewhat from their recent trials.

Old Mr. Astare was not able to work,so Adele must needs be fitted into something.She had a decided calling for fancy handwork. But she grieved much and was miserable at the mere thought of going out to work and leaving her son and father all day. Thru her great skill with the needle and the fine work she turned out, she managed a living for the three of them.Then gradually thru connections and acquaintance she was fairly on her feet , and seem to settle down to her environment.

Then came the end for Mr. Astare,which set her back several months, for she was indeed attached to her father.With the everlasting Lila and the kind sympathy of devoted friends, she recoverd her old self and continued her work.Junior was now in the second year of High School,but it was plainly visible that school and he were not congenial to each other,.So the next best thing was decided. He was mechanically minded,but not physically fit for the vocation. He was taken into custody by some loyal friends ,who owned a fine dress manufacturing concern,and taught the art of cutting,aided by a course in the evening school.

At the time that life was beginning to take on a different aspect for both of them, along comes Wall Street with it's Biff! Bang! Crash! and with it their small investments and savings, truly hardearned, and to add to their burden also their jobs. They have had to struggle at whatever they were able to grasp,since,with the result thru worry and tribulations it has made an old man of Junior ,who is a mere child counting twenty-one years at his next birthday and a broken down old lady of Adele,who in spite of it all smilingly says,"Let's carry on and see it thru!"

Case G. S.

G. S. is an Italian-born woman of thirty-two, employed at the Heinz Co. She was born in Pavia where her father was a laborer on a fruit-farm. When she was brought to this country at the age of ten, she was accompanied by a step-mother for her mother had died three or four years previously. Her step-mother was an ambitious woman and encouraged her father to make a new venture in America. He came to Fresno where the brother of G. S.' step-mother had taken a mortgage on a small fruit-farm. G. S' father worked on a share basis and was able to buy his own farm (mortgaged) in 1921. Black grapes was the chief crop. In Fresno G. S. finished high school; worked a year or two at various farm tasks (berry-picking etc.). In 1922 she married, - a young farm hand, also Italian. In 1925, with one child - a boy - they moved to San José where G. S.' husband worked at the Barron-Gray Packing Co. He has found it very difficult to get work since 1931. A friend of G. S. working at the Heinz Plant secured G. S. her job in that year. Her wages are the only apparent source of income (she denies getting relief) of the family, and a fair.

Case L. S.

L. S. is a man of thirty-six years, American-born, of Genoese parentage. He is unmarried, having been divorced nine years ago. He has only been in Oakland a little over a year. Previously, he had been living in Ohio. He worked for years there as a miner and later as a "calciner" (a skilled position which consists of supervising the reducing of the gypsum rock to liquid form.) He received a good salary ($250 per mo.) but saved nothing. The last few winters he spent in the East (Gypsum, Ohio) the mills were closed entirely and in the summer months operated on a reduced basis very irregularly. This was due to the slump in building and consequent decline in use of gypsum products. Scarcely earning enough to support himself, L. S. arranged to "transfer" his employment from his company's (U. S. Gypsum Co.) Ohio mills to Victorville, Calif. The transfer did not go through, however. This was not a great disappointment to him as he had been warned that it was doubtful if an opening could be made for him at Victorville. Since August, 1933, when he was turned away at the Victorville plant he has been working in Oakland for

a brother who runs an Auto Park. He is eager to returns to his former trade at which his conversation leads one to think him proficient. He knows hardly anything of his parents' background. They are still living, however, - on a "Company" sugar beet farm in Curtice, Ohio. (near Toledo).

Born in Italy 50 years ago. He had no schooling there. As soon as he was able to work for his father on the farm until he set out for America at the age of 16 years.

He came directly to Oakland and secured work here as a truck worker. He remained with them up until 1931. Since that time he has had no work at all or job.

He is married and the father of seven children. He has no musical or musical ability.

At present his oldest son is supporting him.

He came to America with the hopes of bettering his condition.

Born in Italy 40 years ago. He had four years education. Then worked for his father on a farm. He came to the Country and worked as an apprentice in the mines of Pennsylvania. After remaining there 6 years he decided to come to California. He secured work in Oakland in a machine factory and gradually saved enough money to buy into the business. Later he secured full control of the business and his business prospering he came West.

His financial condition since 1917 has been practically the same.

He has had no time for outside studying and is not interested in mechanics or the arts.

Born in Italy 55 years ago. He has no schooling at all. But came here at the age of 18 yrs. He worked as a laborer a while in Napa & Sonoma and then came to California, since coming here he has worked for the Oakland City Street Dept.

He is steel engraved by trade and owns his own home and intends other pieces of property. He has not been affected by the depression, except for a slight cut in wages.

He has no mechanical or inventive ability, neither has attended any schools in this country.

His father was a farmer in Italy.

November 8,1934

Interview by David D. Craig.

Italian born in Rome; age fifty four. As a boy he worked at odd jobs. Coming from the lower class he got no schooling while young. He used to steal,with other boys of the street,from the fruit and vegatable carts that abounded the city's downtown traffic. Then he was conscripted into the Army when he was sixteen. Here he learned the discipline and ardorous tasks of a soldier for king and country. He says it was all work and no pay. The pay per day amounted to a few cents; most of which was taken by the government for services to the soldiers which they ~~they~~ never recieved. The rest was spent on women and in the numerous government canteens where wine of the cheapest sort was sold for twice the price in civilian wine shops. But Army regulations did not allow a first time enlistment man out of the barrack ground. And any love affairs on the part of the recruits had to be done sub rosa. Caught out of the restricted area and the penalty was most severe sometimes another year of service being added on to the initial enlistment.

After five years service,subject came into civilian life again. Everything was strange and new. He had no civilian friends and had no idea where is parents were. He searched for work but found it exceedingly hard to eek out a bare living. So,he turned to petty thievery. The tourists made it easy for him to make a soft living. Then the World War came. He hated the Army; had no patriotic feelings toward Italy and therefore when he was conscripted the second time he escaped over to Swit zerland. Here he easily passed as a native and he began seriously to try and make a living in some honest trade. He became an apprentice in the silversmith trade. He worked hard and long hours. He was shrewd and started a small shop two years after the War. Then he return- to Italy. Here he made application for entry into the United States. In 1925 he came over and took out citizenship papers. He took his citizenship oath in San Francisco and is now in the breadline every day as he says he can get no work and patriotic orginazations have no use for foreign born.

C.M. was born in Milan Italy in 1888. His father was a railroad man and a socialist. C.M. was a locomotive fireman until the outbreak of the war. He opposed the war and for this he and his father were both fired from their jobs. After the war he obtained work in the Fiat Automobile works. He worked here for three years and during this time took an active part in organizing the workers and teaching classes in socialism and communism. He became a communist in 1920. In 1922 the workers began to take over the factories in several cities in northern Italy and C.M. was one of the most active organizers of the workers in the Fiat plant. The workers sieged the plant but due to the majority of the workers being syndicalists they did not seize the the power of the government. C.M. and the rest of the communists could not get the support of the majority of the workers to seize the city and state governments. The workers were content to hold the factory. The fascist black shirt militia under the leadership of Mussilini routed the workers from the factories. In the fight that followed one of C.M.'s brothers and his father were killed by the police. The communists called a demonstration against the terror. C.M. was the speaker. In the struggle by the police to break up the meeting and arrest the speaker a policeman was killed and C.M. escaped. He first went to France and then came to America. He is at present employed but not making very much. He is anxiously awaiting an uprising against Mussilini when he intends to return to Italy. He says the fascists are having trouble in their own ranks.

the 7th child

John was born, 43 years ago in Velletri, Italy, by a Corsican mother and an Italian father from Naples. His father was a cobbler in the city of Velletri. When John was four years old his father died "of old age" (72-3) and John was sent to live with his fathers' youngest brother, also a cobbler, north, on the sea-coast, in the city of Civitavecchia, Italy. The two next older children were sent to another uncle, the mother went to Rome to live with her oldest son, and so the family was disolved. John never saw his mother again — she sent him a crucifix (silver) when he was 12 which he wears to this day — she died after that.

When John was about 16 he "took to the sea" — short trips around to Venice at first on passenger boats — later freights all over the world. During the war he worked on ~~the~~ boats carrying munitions from U.S. to France. After the war

he decided to "dry up" (quit the sea) and come to N.Y. He didn't marry until he came to San Francisco in '25 to work on the docks. For the last 3 yrs. he has been working at the Paraffine in the Linoleum department at a press machine. He doesn't like the work and wants to go back to the sea but his wife won't let him. Although he still wears the crucifix his mother gave him he is not religous - "God is for the priests". He speaks Italian, Portuguese, Spanish, French and English, but cannot read any of them very well. John doesn't care what Mussolini "thinks" or "does" or ~~that~~ bout "the world" — "the sea is the best."

I was born the year 1896 in Olgia province of Novara. On my youth I went to school in winter and in to the alps as cow hand. When I graduated from the 3rd class tecnical school my father died I was then 17 years old. I was supposed to enter the royal normal school of Novara next year but with the dead of my father I was compelled to go to work. I wanted to work in some office, but I coulnt finde none. I finded work as apprentice to a painter in Domo Dossola; It was a good maun and I liked to work for him. I worked for him 3 years and then I was called to the army. In the army I was in the 87th regiment of fantery, I dint like the discipline and I was forced into war in 1917 I was made prisoner by the Austrians and I was interned into a concentration camp in Hungary. There hunger and starvation. With the signing of the peace we were set free; we returned to hour homes thrue Trieste; but that city was occupied bey the Italian troop and as soon we entered the railroad depot we were taken care by the police wich interned us in some worf of the port were we were starving more then in Hungary. A month later I was permitted to go home. I was home after serving the country for the world war, but I was brok and

I decided to come to California I wrote to a cousin of mine in Eureka for the passage money and a month after I was leaving Italy.
On reaching California I went to Eureka with my cousin do that I could not speak inglish, but as soon I could master few words of it I came to San Francisco to work as painter I came to San Francisco in 1921 and in 1922 I got married and now I am father of four children.
I had saved up few dollars bit I speculated them in the stok and in the crash I lost everything. Now I work 1 or 2 or 3 days a week but I don't earn enough to keep alive the family, my wife work too she work in a down town shop and she earn only $. 10.00 a week.

Italian

This poetry was from the Province of Basilicata, Southern Italy June 11th 1877.

He was the youngest of a family of four three girls and a boy. At the time of his birth and boyhood his family were very poor circumstances. They had a small piece of ground, which at times was rented. They were able to raise a few things for their own use, the fathers earning what little money they had by odd labouring jobs that he was able to find.

As a boy he had to help earn his own bread, had little or no educational advantages, as at that time they had no public school for him to attend, and could speak little or no English.

At the age of nineteen married one of the girls in his native town. He and wife kept busy working at different jobs, all hard work, and would be paid, but nothing was cheap, was able to save a little money. By this time three years after living married he was the father of two children a boy and girl. It was about this time he says that

he got the funds to go to America. He with what money he had saved after he came, and the selling of what few things he had, he and his little family bought steerage passage to America via way of New York.

After landing in New York says he was nearly broke, and understanding little or no English, says if he had known of money would have taken the next boat home.

After locating a cousin who had been in New York for three years, and who had caught the "American spirit" he settled down. His cousin at the time owned a small boot block stand, and was making a good living, and gave him a job as assistant. Skip he made about twelve dollars a week, but managed to live on it. To me that small amount seemed like a lot of money to him.

Stayed with the job for two years, and in the mean time went to night school learning he says the only real education he had ever had. He cried and rode and spoke English and liked this country and decided to stay.

By this time he was the father of

another child, a boy. But said it made him feel mighty good to know he could give them the advantages he had never had, and that was at least a public school education.

After this he got a job on the fruit farm at eighty-five dollars a month, but says all this time was saving money and sending money home to his parents.

After living in New York for two years his health and became very ill, the result leaving him with a weakened lung condition. So after consulting with his doctor, he advised, that they move west to a dry climate for a while. So they decided on Bisbee, Arizona.

On arriving at Bisbee, says he had no trouble in getting a job on one of the copper mines, it being hard, and hot work, but paid good money. After living in Arizona for five years he decided to come on West to California, say by this time, he had saved a few thousand dollars and waiting a chance to invest some of it.

After living in Fresno for a short time he was made a proposition to take me a ranch on a share basis, says the first three years he made money but the last two was not so good, but he could see it was coming in wages. In the meantime the family was growing up, and he had given them all a good public school education and says he was getting big, by hard knocks, but liked it. About this time the son, who had contracted his illness in New York, and who had always been in a weakened condition since, died.

After remaining in Fresno for about seven years, they decided this was more suited to San Francisco, so he closed his affairs there and moved to this city, says at that time just he took enough money to last him the rest of his life, as their wants were simple and they could stretch a few dollars a long way.

After arriving in San Francisco, says he bought his real estate, in the Sixties

section of the city which he called and fixed them up, living in one, and renting the other for twenty dollars per month.

It was about this time the Bank of Italy stock was forming, and all his friends seemed to be getting rich on a few dollars invested, and while he received a call to get in on the ground floor found himself plunging with the rest of his friends, and as the time the stock kept going up, not like thousands of others he never sold, but kept on hoping, some day if it hadn't been for the wife received days and the flats, and such that as well, but the unfortunate sign the deed, for which he is very thankful now. Say if he had sold could have made a fortune, but stuck and went down in the crash with thousands of others. But what stock he had was paid for, and still has it and still has hopes of making a fortune some time in the future.

After the crash found he had little or nobody care, and instead of being rich, it was a case of going it alone. At his age he found work was not as easy to find, as times were hard, and the depression was on and things looked pretty high. But through a former friend of his, got him a job as a janitor, in one of the Bank of Utley buildings, had the job for his year, and was thinking how lucky he was when he was hit not a few days notice. Says he had saved some money in the meantime, and could stand it for a while.

Says at this time some of the friends wanted him to lay the hot by training, but after being among them, failed and failed, and it did not appeal to him. Not one cut the hard made up to and had hardened heartly, and that he did not want to start breaking the "Golden Rule" at this late stage in life.

At the present time says he is looking after three small apartment houses standing and running as the owner, while he is not making much, he still has his flats - rent and clean, and feels that he and his family can get along nicely, for it was only for a short time till his Band of Italy strike will be forming again, and at the same time he paying big dividends, he will then take a trip back to the old country, stay a year, and then return to San Francisco, where he says he will remain the rest of his life.

I don't know if there is any thing to be judged, or gained by the story of this uneducated Italian, the story we gave to us. Or informing me that in 1906 - 787.000 Emigrated from Italy to other Countries, I asked him what effect this had on his home land.

Says he noticed only a few in Southern States. Says the result was that many villages could be found containing only old men, women, and children, as all were capable of working had gone. But that the few that do return with a little money and advanced ideas, of life living in other countries, takes all the good.

On the other hand many return who have been living in squalor and semi-slavery, and have formed drunken habits and unsettled ideas have just the opposite effect.

Says since he was a boy that education is advancing fast, but yet there are still persons in the south who be 1/3 of the population and neither read or write, in spite of the fact that they have been adding about thirty thousand new schools per year.

He speaks of Garfield's or one

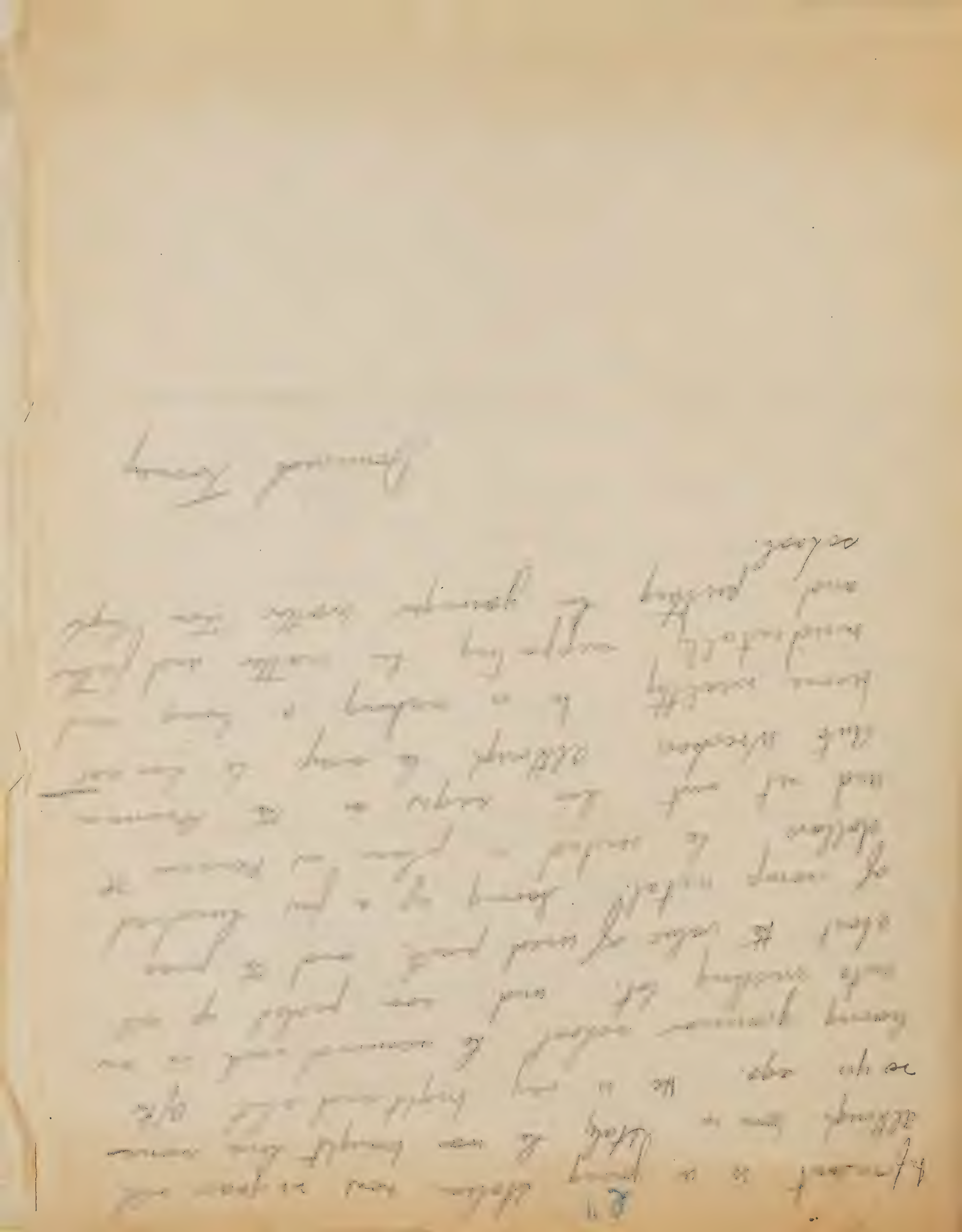
In our own country we speak of Geo Washington. We send to his their great National Hero, and say we stand no matter what his station in life may be, full of loving patriotism, and devotion to their Country, of the memory of his name.

Says while Victor Emmanuel as King has little or no power, as Premier Mussolini is the real power behind the throne, that the Fascisti movement now in ascendancy is very popular with all classes.

But he says, while he is glad of giving me this information, wants me to understand he is now a citizen of this Country and has been for many years. Interested in politics to the extent that he votes at all important elections, to the best interests of himself and the commonwealth.

So I would tell this Italian, while proud of his Native land, as just as proud of his adopted Country, a good citizen.

Norman W. Phelps



traveled from one ~~u~~ university to another as a free lance student. He studied sculpturing & casting. In 1920 he returned to America, this time to Arizona & New Mexico where he studied Indian Art.

Signor Matania is now with the Geological Survey of California where he has charge of the making of relief maps of California.

Theodore Frey
Report Chilean

I was born in Antofagosta. When I was through school I went to a contractor and worked there for 4 years. Finally I was a full pledged mason and I earned the same wage as a grown up. Yes we have unions in Chile and we also have labor insurances. About 10 years ago we came here and I admit I made more money but prices for food and rent are so high you need the big wages.

Against my will the earnings did drop and for the last 4 years I am on relief and work for 3 days with the other fellows. I have been shifted frequently but as long as things are not flourishing I think one cannot have the pick. I do not mind where or what I work as long I could make money enough for my family to live on.

No I can't forsee how it will come here to betterments without doing something for it. I am not distributing any money outside to China or Japan but I would like to see money employed here first before it is send to foreign parts. Perhaps a Fara. repair organization could dig up enough good paid work to make one feel independent.

— Italian — 1

This immigrant with his wife and one child came from the city of Turin, in the northwestern part of Italy.
He and his wife were both employed as janitor and janitress in the Academy of Design.
Their average work was twelve hours a day, and plenty of work to do, as they never seemed able to keep up with it.
Owing to the scarcity of money, they were always short handed, which made them do double work.
They saved what money they could, often going without the necessities of life, trying to get gold enough, so they could buy a small farm.
He and his small family lived in the basement of the building in two poorly furnished rooms, but were glad to get that, as they did not have to pay rent.
Pork and beans was the ordinary fare of the poorer lot of Italians.
As to their clothing, as they never went any where did not cost much, and kept in use a long time.
This man neither smokes nor drinks, quite strange for an Italian.
His wife's health starting to break down, from

the heavy work, and seeing no opportunity to better their condition, decided to leave Italy, and had intended to emigrate to Brazil where his brother had emigrated, several years before, but was persuaded to come to the U. S. A. instead. Eventually arrived in Naples where they were held up over six months before they received permission to depart, and they just did make the quota allowed.

If his army record had not been exceptionally good, he doubted if would have received permission.

Arrived in New York City in due course, and had no difficulty in finding friends among his own people, who guided him until he could get a smattering of English, which he picked up rapidly.

Worked hard at various jobs, earning better pay than he had ever been able to make.

His wifes health continued poor to cold in winter and too hot in summer for her, so concluded to come west to California.

Has been here a little over a year, both his wife having fully regained her health, and himself having a steady job with

Santa Fe R.R. Co, making four dollars a day as helper in the boiler shops.
Has been very lucky so far in not having been laid off; dont know why, but plenty of older hands have been let out.
Has an idea that because he tends to his work and tries to please everybody is the reason he keeps on.
Has two children now, and is going to make them good Americans.
Has a comfortable little home of four rooms with a nice back yard, which his wife has filled with flowers.
They have a plentiful supply of good plain substantial food, good clothes, so what more could one want.
If his wife could only learn how to speak American he would be very happy, but says she just cant make the grade.
Never intends to go back to Italy; is perfectly contented here.
This man is of better laboring class, uneducated but honest and industrious.
This country will come out of its trouble all right; the rest of the world is very sick; and look out for war in the near future in Europe.

Geary

ITALIAN

The subject of this interview was an Italian man about thirty five years old. He is a butcher by trade. At present he works in a small butcher shop in Oakland. He is a member of the meat cutters Union and is bitterly opposed to non-union butchers, particularly the Chinese, who, he ways, sell poor grades of meat much cheaper than their competitors. He is single, and living at home with his mother and brother.

His father, who was a sausage maker, died in Italy about ten years ago. Shortly after his death his brother came to the United States, and a year or two later sent for him and his mother. He was unemployed most of the time in Italy and he said that he and his mother had a very hard time after his father's death. He learned the butchering business in Oakland, where he spent three years working in a slaughter house. Later, he worked in a meat packing plant. The last two years he has been working in a small whop waiting on retail trade. This he considers about the peak of his profession.

He has never been unemployed for more than a few weeks at a time. He belongs to no other organization but his union, does not go to church, and spends most of his evenings in Dance halls, cafes, or the movies.

He is able to read and write English, although he has never gone to school in this country. He said his mother goes to church on Sunday. His brother is the head janitor in a downtown office building. He also is single.

ITALIAN

The subject of this narrative is from Lucca; his antecedents resided in that vicinity for generations. He seems to have decended from hardy and vigorous stock. He is sixty years of age at the time of interview. Broad shouldered, deep chested and stands erect, yet there is a history of three tubercular cases in that family, two fatal.

It is now 1894. Giovanni is the oldest of four children of a typical Italian working class family occupied at his trade as a stone mason. Their neighbor's nephew, Anton, was then leaving for the United States and recited fascinating stories of the easy money to be made. His present wages in comparison seemed pitiful. He was eager for a change, so they left Italy, together, for San Francisco where promised employment awaited them with the vegetable commission merchants. Anton was of an adventurous temperament, very skillful with cards as Giovanni remembers, and after a short while left for Idaho, where he seemed to prosper.

Giovanni's job was to help get the market ready by 3:30 a.m. for the truck loads of green vegetables, which would begin to arrive from the gardens on the then outskirts of San Francisco where Ocean avenue is at present. Among his many other menial duties was

to cull the stock; put the small potatoes in the bottom of the sacks; brim the dead leaves from the cabbages and lettuce. He seemed to indulge himself reflecting on this and similiar episodes. "Everything here graftia, never changa, always be like isa! American bull!" I reticently thought; were not nearly all of our so-called American practices imported via Europe? From the tortured Indians, by the hands of the Spanish Conquerors to the "spottings" of Al Capone? His customers were mostly Italians from the Latin section; conducting their shops provincially.

Almost all the people he met and associated with were Italian, those he worked for and with; the "trade"; and his landlady of the "Lucca House" in ___ street. There seems to be a specific gravity to environment. The pull is to the approbative lowest level. His reaction to the consensus of opinion was that America was an illusion; Italy, real.

He returned at this time. He worked at his old trade, married. One year later a boy was born to them. The economic condition in Italy remained unchanged. They led a very frugal existance. From his short experience in America, he subconsciously thought there was better opportunity for him with the responsibility of a family and submitted to the suggestions of his wife to return.

1901 finds Giovanni established in a typical Italian fruit store, adjacent to the "Lucca House." Dealing almost entirely with his countrymen his inclinations have always remained so. That was to his detriment. To this day after nearly forty years in this country his speech is in a marked vernacular.

During the ensuing eighteen years, three more children were born; two boys and a girl. His mode of life and character of business remained the same, but in his stolid way, he managed to buy a small house and provide for his family.

His wife died during the 1920 influenza epidemic leaving that young family on his hands. There is no substitute for a mother. The germ of disintegration set in; his sons, especially, were out of his control. The contributing factor may have been the long hours the store required. The three youngest children were attending school. The oldest boy hoboed, as he said. The girl assumed the duties of the mother; keeping house, preparing the father's dinner every night, as late as 11 p.m. ; arising at 6 a.m. to make the breakfast for the family,. Between her school and duties, it was a very arduous task for a child.

The boys helped in the store after school and on Saturdays. He was scolding and severe, but they were

at least learning the rudiments of the business. They abruptly decided to leave him when offered work with a chain grocery company, the older boy later becoming manager. The burdens on the girl increased as she was forced to take the boy's place in the store. She finally broke under the strain. Tuberculosis developed and she died a year later, 1928.

At the beginning of this present depression the father's business was depleted. Most of his customers had charge accounts. Nearly all were of the unskilled laboring workman class who were the first to be affected by the depression.

The sons saw the handwriting on the wall. It was impossible for the father to continue in that section. Through their insistance they all pooled their recourses and opened a grocery store in the Ingleside District, a high, middle-class residential section of San Francisco. The sons, having knowledge of the operation of a modern store, arranged one accordingly; their experience with the chain store served them.

The father seems set in his ways, perhaps from his long and close assocation with his countrymen. He is unadaptable to this new entironment, and he is chagrined when reprimanded for sitting in the doorway on sunny

afternoons smoking his "Tuscano" cigar. He is entirely out of place in a store of this type; cannot take orders over the phone make deliveries or wait on the customers, however the sons are managing successfully considering the general economic condition.

Recently the older son married, and is now arranging to buy the building and install living quarters above the store. The father is returning to Italy to live with his niece in Lucca. He is frustrated. After the girl died, the house was deserted. The boys roomed at a hotel rather than live under the father's roof. The home is for sale for less then half its original cost.

ITALIAN

This man has been in this country four years, coming from the city of Florence, in central Italy. A landscape gardener by profession, he has been employed in the Botanical Gardens of Florence since early childhood. He worked his way from one of the mediocre positions to the positions of supervising foreman, a sort of Assistant Superintendent.

Being a single man he had been doing very well, saving a little money and living very well, until he had got mixed up in the political situation, being forced to side with his superiors to hold his job. It turned out unfortunately for him, as the entire regime was bundled out and a new set, he calls them blackshirts, were put in charge. He loafed in the city for several months, being hindered from getting anything to do, and a constant drain on his savings, he left Florence and went to Rome. After about a month's time he obtained a position as common gardener in the Vatican Gardens, but as the pay was small and the hours long he decided to try his fortune in the United States.

He is slightly crippled in that one of his legs is about three inches shorter than the other. For this reason he had been exempt from military service and for the same reason it made it much more easy for him to leave Italy as the Italian Government has not much use

for a man that they can not use for some military purpose.

Arriving in New York, he passed the Immigration Authorities without any trouble which was a great relief as he had thought that on account of the difference in his limbs they might send him back; he found his fears groundless.

He picked up a few odd jobs in New York through Italian friends, enough to keep him going until he could come to California where he intended to try to follow his particular line of work. Carlo put in his spare time trying to master the English language, which seemed to come very hard to him; he was helped a great deal by his roommate who had already been in this country some years.

Eventually Carlo landed in California, but the only job he was able to get was on a vegetable ranch down the peninsula. It was hard work and plenty of it with the very commonest of living quarters and fare, but he stuck with it, keeping his eyes open for something better to come his way. He leased himself an acre and a half with a small shack on it and started his present business of supplying florists with flowers and plants. Carlo at the present time has five acres of his own, employs three men, and is doing a fine business, something he claims he never would have been able to do in

his own country.

He had never been able to get much of an education in the old country but since coming to San Francisco he married an Italian girl, born in this country, who had a High School education. She is doing her best to teach him, and he is doing very well. He has never regretted leaving Italy and thinks the United States is the only place on the globe. With a bright future before him, a good wife, plenty to eat and drink, good clothes to wear and being his own boss, what more could a man wish for?

ITALIAN

This man and his wife are from the small town of Ivrea, in the province of Piedmont, in the northwestern section of Italy. The town, a small one of about nine thousand inhabitants, is situated on a small stream named Baltea. The man and his wife both worked in manufacturing plants the woman in a Vermicelli, and the husband in a cotton factory. They lived as did the usual peasant class; their home was three small rooms, poorly furnished, and their food substantial of its kind, macaroni, fish, vegetables and claret, with now and then, on a Sunday or holiday, a chicken or duck.

They averaged ten hours a working day and the day of the woman was about equal to forty cents in American money and the man's about one dollar and ten cents. They had worked this way all their lives as had their parents before them. The father had been killed in the battle with Austrians in the late war which left him to carry on for his mother and two sisters. His mother having passed away and his two sisters getting married left him and his wife free and, having come to the conclusion they were getting nowhere, they decided to try one of the big cities and see if they could better their circumstances.

They went to Turin about forty miles from their old home walking the distance pulling their scant belongings in a little homemade cart. As they could find

no steady work in Turin they went down to Genoa. They fared a little better, but nothing to brag about. They both worked at house cleaning and porter work but could get nothing steady to do. While in Genoa they heard a great deal about the United States and began saving every penney they could get a hold of towards the passage money to this country.

They eventually made their way down the coast, on a small steamer to Naples. The wife fortunately got a job in one of the hotels while he did longshore work. They made their application for passports but is was over three months before they got any action. He had served his time in the army and in the first reserve and he thinks the authorities hold up permission, because they did not want his kind to leave the country, he having been a sergeant of infantry and understanding several languages. Finally having received permission they came to New York by steerage.

Arriving in New York in the middle of summer was not so good and having located friends in San Francisco they came to California and they say there is nothing on earth that would compel them to leave. They have been here four years and only one to go before he becomes a citizen. When he gets his final papers, he will be an American and not an Italian American. He says that if

the people of America understood the truth of Europe they never would complain about conditions in this country. He has a nice little four room flat, comfortably furnished, a baby son, a nice wife, a one man woman, a fairly good job in a macaroni factory, so what more could one wish for.

Something strange in Italians: he and his wife are both Protestants. He thinks that President Roosevelt has a big job cut out for himself but he is just the man to do it; another Garibaldi. As for this California election he thinks it is a very mixed up mess, too many promises mean too many lies. This couple are fairly well educated, both having gone to night school for two years besides what education they were able to receive in the old country. Both man and woman are of the fair Nordic type. These make desirable citizens, honest and straight-forward.

ITALIAN

This is a story rather typical of the local Italians during our dry era.

Pete is from Northern Italy where he was born, in 1900. He left Italy when twenty years old and has been here in the bay region fifteen years.

His father was a farmer, owing his small farm, raising most of his own food, and working for others when possible.

Pete worked at the Pottery in west Alameda for several years, but along in 1926 he concluded he could make more money at bootlegging, like many others of his compatriots; and opened what he called a "joint", here in Alameda, and, although he was arrested several times and fined, he made and saved money. He would run a place until it got too "hot" and then close it and open another, and so on until the end of prohibition. He finally bought, from one of his countrymen, half interest in a small gold mine in the mountains, somewhere near Sonora, California. The two of them are now working this mine and making a little money.

Pete was married for a short time but they could not make a go of it and were divorced in 1929. There was one child, a girl. He has never applied for citizenship.

ITALIAN

This man is a native of the city of Naples, who emigrated to this country shortly after the close of the world war.

His father had been a contractor in Naples, and had done a lucrative business. He had sent his son to a private academy where he had as companions only the children of people in comfortable circumstances.

His father and one of his brothers had been conscripted into the army, and so he had been compelled to return to his home in order to take care of his mother. But it was not long before he was also conscripted and sent to the front. His father and brother were both killed at the battle of the Piave, and his mother died shortly afterwards, of grief. He himself had been wounded twice and slightly gassed but it will always remain a marvel how anyone survived the horror of those years in the trenches.

At the close of the war, on being released from service, he returned to Naples and rescued what he could from their former small fortune. After everything had been settled he found himself the possessor of a few hundred dollars and a desire to leave Italy for good.

He decided to come to California, and after obtaining the proper passports, in a slightly illegal manner, he took a steamer, second class, for New York.

After a very stormy voyage he reached his destination, and after passing the Immigration authorities stayed for a month in New York City. Then he took the train for California. He arrived safely and has been here ever since. He married an Irish woman after being here three years, in which time he had studied hard to master the English language nad is proud of the fact that he has really done so well.

He and his wife were married by a Judge of the lower courts, as he himself had been raised a Catholic and his wife was raised in the Protestant faith; it was the only course they could pursue. They now have several children; two boys and two girls to be exact; and having steady employment he has been able to buy a five room house in the Sunset district on the installment plan. The future looks exceedingly rosy to him. He is employed as head bookkeeper by a large commission house and although the hours are long and the work rather trying, he has no complaints to make, considering the condition some of his friends are in through the present depression.

He has trouble with his lings occasionally, as a result of being gassed by the Austrians while in the trenches, but that is growing less and less as time goes by. He thinks, from all appearances, that another great war is in the offing and is very thankful for the fact that he is in America and not in Italy. America can live in the future while Europe is dying

in the past. He also thinks that by all means America must be prevented from entering the coming horror. This man is a first class citizen and a credit to his adopted country.

ITALIAN

The subject of this narrative was born in Bologna, Italy in the province of Cisalfine Gaul. In speaking of which he said it resembled California very much in climate and in the productivity of the soil where they raise olives vineyards, dairies, vegetables of all kinds, chickens etc. The farms were rented on the tenantry system on a fifty fifty basis. He said the farmers were very kind and thrifty and this method of rental proved beneficial to all parties concerned.

He attended school through the third grade which is equivalent to the sixth grade in our school, they have more days per year in Italy and each grade takes one year to complete whereas we take only six months to each grade. He came to this country with a sister at the age of fourteen and went to Illinois where his father was living, and working as a foreman in a gas company, and for whom he has worked up to the present time which is nearly forty years. He has been placed under his father as apprentice repairing meters in which he became very proficient and worked for three years. Being of an erratic disposition he decided to quit and soon after obtained a position with the A____ packing company making bologna sausages, here he worked three years,

until a friend wrote to him from California to come on a visit which he did and was so much impressed that his visit has lasted thus far twelve years.

He has tried several times to obtain work with the PG&E Company to repair gas meters, but has been unsuccessful as he says it takes considerable pull to get into this company.

He obtained a job in Albany with a German sausage manufacturer with whom he worked three years. It seems a coincidence that he has worked in cycles of three years in his past jobs, but since the depression he has not been so fortunate, during which time he has worked at the shoe repairing business and then as a bootblack which he has followed for the past four years, He owns the stand but is not satisfied with his calling but says he would rather do that than walk the streets.

He has two brothers in Italy who would like to come here but it is very hard to obtain entrance to the United States, and besides Mussolini has them drafted to do military work for eighteen months, for which they obtain food, clothing and about twenty five cents per day. The excercise they receive is very strenuous and they are glad when their service is over.

ITALIAN

This man is the brother of a subject previously discussed. He too was born in Caggiano, and like his elder brother, came to the United States at the age of fourteen, to seek his fortune.

Unlike his brother, he spent a few years attending evening school in an endeavor to learn American customs and language, and prepare himself for a business career.

Upon his arrival in New York, he sold papers to earn his living, and later followed his brothers footsteps to California. In Los Angeles, he married into an Italian family, and proceeded to follow the tradition of raising a large family.

He entered the steamship brokerage business, the real estate brokerage business, and has been a notary public. He managed to amass a good deal of money and property, but was hard hit by the depression. He still owns quite a bit of property, but it's market value is greatly depreciated, and it is almost impossiple to convert it into money.

He is now sixty years of age, and like his brother has ten children, none of whom has had

an extensive education, but all of whom are doing well in a variety of occupations and businesses.

Like his brother, he would like to return to Italy, but has to refrain from doing so because of his financial and family ties in this country.

He has encountered very little racial prejudice during his business career in this country, altho he encountered some during his boyhood while living in New York City, where the people of various nations often clashed in the poorer sections of the City.

ITALIAN

These twin brothers are very recent arrivals from the city of Naples. They are young men of the better class and are very well educated. One of them is an architect, and the other is studying electrical engineering.

The reason for their emigrating is political. From what I could gather, their father had been arrested for his political activities in opposition to the present regime. With no prospect of an immediate trial, which, the sons claim, will be a farce, the sons concluded that they, being also under suspicion, had best emigrate.

They intended to go to Brazil, but after finding that the laboring and farming class of Italians were going to that country, they decided to come to the United States.

Their home life in Naples and at a small country place a few miles from that city was all that could be desired. They lived well and associated with the best society, but the fact that they were not favorable to the present Fascist Government made their situation decidedly uncomfortable. Their mother has passed away some years before, and with no other near relative to consider, they disposed of everything they could and applied for pass-

ports. Strangely enough, they had no trouble in getting them, so they concluded that the present government was glad to get rid of them.

After arriving in the United States, they stayed a short while in New York City. From there, they went to Buffalo, and then on to Chicago. There they bought an interest in an Italian Commission house, but after two months they found they had misplaced their confidence and were allied with Blackshirt sympathizers, so they sold their interest at a considerable loss and came to California.

They stopped in Los Angeles a month, then came to San Francisco. Their poor business success and the cost of travelling made a large dent in their finances, and it became necessary for them to get employement of some sort i mediately.

Besides Italian, they both speak French fluently and English almost as well, therefore, it was but a short time before they were placed in positions which were, tho not lucrative, of a sort that promised advancement in the near future.

The two boys have been doing what they could to free their father, but so far everything has been futile and they fear they will never see him again. Conditions in Italy are bad, no matter what reports the Italian

government sends out to the contrary. Wages are low, and the people are kept in ignorance, but with the constant threat of war hanging over their heads.

The boys had intended going back to their old home some future day, but now that desire has entirely vanished, they are perfectly satisfied here, and are going to become American citizens and forget Italy and the insane Mussolini.

They say that people in America do not realize how well off they are, even with the depression, the country seems to be passing through that stage, and pass through it will.

ITALIAN

This subject is fifty one years of age, having come to this country about thirty years ago from Naples, Italy, where he was a barber. He now has a little one man shop in his front ~~year~~ yard, living in a small house at the rear of the shop. He has four grown children, three of whom are boys, two of whom are unemployed at the present, while the other is a truck driver for a produce house. The daughter who has never worked until the last year or so, is twenty-one years of age, has been married for the last two months and is working, sorting tomatoes in the Heinz factory. She is cultivating her voice, sings over the radio once in awhile but gets no pay for it.

This family rent their house and the rent is paid, are getting along well, and like it here better than the old country, although would like very much to make a trip back merely for a visit of a few months.

The mother passed away some six years ago and the girl does the housework, as her husband, living with them is employed in a factory.

For Mr. Cadin — by Thomas Barnett

John Serri — Italian — Age 40 years

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In 1905 John Serri came directly to San Francisco with his father from Rome, Italy. Young Serri was then eleven years old. His father got a job through a relative driving a truck and put his son in grammar school. The boy had a hard time of it at first learning the language but after two years he had advanced to the average grade in school for one of his years. When he was thirteen years old while selling newspapers on Market street he was run down by a heavy truck and his leg so badly crushed that it had to be amputated. There followed some months in a hospital for John Serri - months he put in studying and reading every book that was brought him. It was in the hospital that he began to draw - at first mainly to pass the time away then as he really became more proficient with the growing idea that he might some day make a living at it. At first he only copied pictures from the magazines and

stores - if one had a load of lumber to sell one wouldn't try to sell it to a book store. Gradually he worked up quite a trade for his drawings in the magazine field. He was able to buy himself an artificial limb that enables him to walk with hardly a limp. Life began to open out for him. He was twenty three and making money. In 1917 his father died and Seri realized then how much his father had meant to him. He passed a lonely two years and then married. He says bitterly that his married life was a farce. Crippled though he was he was supposed to support not only his wife but her whole family. At this time he was making over a hundred dollars a week yet he saved nothing. In 1922 he left his wife and she sued him for desertion. There was a long and bitter court battle which broke Seri and ended with Seri being ordered to pay his ex wife $100.00 a month. She had sued him for a hundred a week saying he made a thousand a month. Seri's opinion of divorce in America that enables a woman to make a man pay all the rest of his life for living with her for one hectic year is a delight to the eye. Up until 1925 he paid his $100 a month but then his ex-wife remarried and he stopped paying. She threatened him but never hailed him into court. Since 1927 he has not heard from her. But all this

newspapers but was changed from this on the advice of a doctor who became interested in him. The doctor advised him to stop copying other artists pictures and draw from life — even though his efforts at first were very bad. So Serri began drawing from the scenes and objects that were before him constantly in the hospital. Gradually he became fairly expert in his own original way and when he left the hospital his father sent him to an art school — with the idea, Serri says, that one with a leg off should have some easy profession. Serri says the art school did him more harm than good so at the end of a year he quit and put in his whole time keeping house for his father. He kept on with his drawing putting from him as well as he was able the stilted technique he had acquired at the art school. When he was eighteen he drew a cartoon and sent it to the publisher of an Oakland newspaper. It was accepted and paid for and all enthusiastic Serri began drawing cartoons on every conceivable subject and mailing them to magazines and newspapers. It was a hit and miss proposition at first until Serri learned that magazines are somewhat like department

bitterness in his life made his work suffer. In 1931 he was flat broke - he had scores of drawings cartoons, etc., but he couldn't give them away. For six months during 1931 he was on the charities. This was the lowest period of his life he says. His leg began to give him trouble and generally he was at a very low ebb. In January 1932 he got a job in a sign painters shop at $12.00 a week. He has worked there ever since. He is now getting $16.00 a week which more than helps him. Besides he is becoming ambitious again and once in a while he sells a drawing or illustration to a magazine or newspaper. He has been down but now he is coming up again. He has a steady job and keeps drawing in his spare time. He hopes some day to make connection with a syndicate and once more, get into the big money.

Italy

L273

Antonio "Tony" —

Was born in Florence in 1884.
Was educated in one of the best schools there - but had to go to War in 1914 just as he was preparing to go into his Fathers Banking business.
His Mother died while he was at War + when he returned in 1918 after the Armistice - he found his Father on his death bed -
One brother was killed in the War - leaving just he + his sister Marie.
After settling up their Fathers business they came to San Francisco -
His Uncle lived here and was an officer in one the largest Banks.
In 1920 both Tony + Marie took positions in the Bank - which they secured through their Uncles influence.
Tony is now a Branch Manager in one of Branches of this same bank -
Marie married an Irishman in good circumstances in 1926 - -
Tony has not married - says he has been too busy - lives with Marie - now Mrs. Murphy + seems to be on the the way to a prosperous old age.

Robt Grubb

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PAUL RADIN PAPERS: SERIES I/ ITALIANS

XXXIIB Italione